

Current Conditions: Presence or Absence of Wilderness Characteristics

Area Unique Identifier: CO-060-027

Acreage: 14,527.67

Is the area of sufficient size?

Yes ☒ No ☐

Description

This unit of BLM land is identified as CO-060-027. The entire northern boundary is private land. The eastern boundary is road 3136b and Forest Service land. The southern boundary is road 3049, 3050 and 3049d. The western boundary is private land and road 3051. In the south eastern corner of the unit, BLM road 3136 is blocked by a locked gate (9 heavy duty locks and two chains) at the boundary between Forest Service and BLM land.

Not taken into consideration in the inventory process, however; a section of BLM land adjacent to CO-060-027 bounded by 3085 and 3051 (east of 3085, east and west of 3051) has potential as LWC and a revision of the boundaries could potentially include these areas into CO-060-027.

(1) Does the area appear to be natural?

Yes ☒ No ☐ N/A ☐

Description

This parcel consists of rolling hills and many areas dominated by spruce and aspen. In the southern portion of the parcel Rock Creek flows from southwest to northeast through Devil's Hole. Rock Creek is also present in the north eastern portion of this unit. The area to the east of road 3050 and to the east and west of road 3136 has evidence of thinning with removal in the past ten to twenty years. The human impact of this logging activity is highly visible with the presence of tree stumps and skid roads. There are several visible closed roads and old skid roads throughout the south eastern section. These roads range from high to little or no visibility. A few of the closed routes have been almost completely overgrown by vegetation.

Due to the disturbance associated with past timber sales and other vegetation treatments in the southern portion of this unit, we recommend a boundary adjustment to exclude those areas. The proposed new boundary would follow BLM Road 3050 to the end, then along the closed road nearly to the end, then down the slope to the east of the unnamed tributary to Rock Creek, then along Rock Creek to the BLM/private property boundary, then east to the corner where sections 9, 10, 15, and 16 meet, then southeast along the ridge to the BLM/FS boundary.

The boundary adjustment would split the area and so create three areas. The area to the west with wilderness characteristics would be 7,379.8 acres and so would still meet the size criterion. The

central area that was removed due to excessive disturbance would be approximately 2,721.2 acres. The area to the east with wilderness characteristics would be approximately 4,426.7 acres and so would not meet the size criterion.

- (2) Does the area (or the remainder of the area if a portion has been excluded due to unnaturalness and the remainder is of sufficient size) have outstanding opportunities for solitude?**

Yes ☒ No ☐ N/A ☐

Description

This parcel has little road access which creates outstanding opportunities for solitude. The high topographic relief and densely wooded terrain also provides solitude. Due to these conditions numerous visitors could be in the area at one time. This area is land-locked by surrounding private land and there is no outside road access. As a result this parcel only receives ± 250 annual visitors; this mainly consists of surrounding land owners and hunters.

- (3) Does the area (or the remainder of the area if a portion has been excluded due to unnaturalness and the remainder is of sufficient size) have outstanding opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation?**

Yes ☒ No ☐ N/A ☐

Description

This area provides many opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation. Hiking, backpacking, wildlife viewing and climbing near Devils Hole are all recreational possibilities within this parcel. Use of the land is self- directed and there are no recreational facilities in the area.

- (4) Does the area have supplemental values (ecological, geological, or other features of scientific, educational, scenic, or historic value)?**

Yes ☒ No ☐ N/A ☐

Description

This unit offers many views of the La Garita Wilderness and the San Juan Mountains. Two potential fens exist in this unit, the first is 0.21 acres and rated low, the second is 0.31 acres and rated medium. This parcel also contains a high level of lynx habitat along with low levels of elk winter and mule deer winter habitat.

Summary of Analysis

Area Unique Identifier: CO-060-027

Result of Analysis:

1. Does the area meet any of the size requirements? ☒ Yes ☐ No
2. Does the area appear to be natural? ☒ Yes ☐ No
3. Does the area offer outstanding opportunities for solitude or a primitive or unconfined type of recreation? ☒ Yes ☐ No
4. Does the area have supplemental values? ☒ Yes ☐ No

Check one

☒ The area, or portion of the area, has wilderness characteristics and is identified as lands with wilderness characteristics.

☐ The area does not have wilderness characteristics.

Prepared by (team members):

John Millea

Corrie Barbour

(Name, Title, Date)

Reviewed by District or Field Manager:

Name: Brian George Title: Field Manager

Date: 7/31/13

*This form documents information that constitutes an inventory finding on wilderness characteristics. It does not represent a formal land use allocation or a final agency decision subject to administrative remedies under either 43 CFR parts 4 or 1610.5-3.